

AMENDMENT NO. ____
TO
RESOLUTION NO. RS2025-961

Madam President –

I hereby move to amend Resolution No. RS2025-961 by removing the existing attachments titled Operating Grant Support Guidelines and Thrive Project Funding Criteria Guidelines and replacing those documents with the attached documents titled Thrive Project Grant Criteria & Guidelines and Operating Support Grant Criteria & Guidelines, and adding the document titled FY25 Grant Cycle Timeline.

SPONSORED BY:

Delishia Porterfield
Brenda Gadd
Members of Council



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Operating Support Grant Criteria & Guidelines

FY25 GRANT CYCLE | FOR ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE Spring 2025

APPLICATION DEADLINE February 18, 2025, 11:59 p.m.

Previously Submitted by Monday, January 29, 2024, 11:59 p.m.

Resubmit all applications online at <https://mnac.submittable.com/submit>

For application assistance or for first time applicants contact, the Strategic Grants and Initiatives team at Arts.Grants@nashville.gov.

Metro Nashville Arts Commission

Mailing Address:

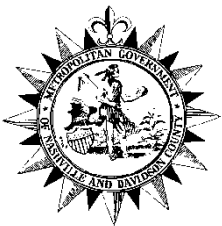
P.O. Box 196300

Nashville TN 37219-6300

615.862.6720 phone | 615.862.6731 fax

arts@nashville.gov | metroartsnashville.com

@metroartsnash on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter



Funding for this program is provided by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County

PUBLIC NOTICE: Nondiscrimination Policies, ADA Compliance & Accessibility

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, or ability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities. Discrimination against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion, retention, discipline, or any other employment practices because of non-merit factors shall be prohibited.

Questions, concerns, complaints, requests for accommodation, or requests for additional information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act may be forwarded to Metro Arts' ADA Compliance Coordinator:

Vivian Foxx, Metro Nashville Arts Commission, P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219-6300

Vivian.Foxx@nashville.gov (615) 862-6721, TTY Relay Service 800-848-0298

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INTERPRETATION SERVICES: Should an individual need language interpretation, Metro Arts will secure assistance using a Metro approved over-the-phone or in-person interpretation service*

Si necesita ayuda con el idioma, háganoslo saber. Obtendremos un intérprete que puede ayudarnos a comunicarnos entre nosotros.

بعضنا مع التواصل في مساعدتنا يمكنه مترجم على نحصل سوف. بذلك إخبارنا فالرجاء ، لغوية مساعدة إلى بحاجة كنت إذا البعض.

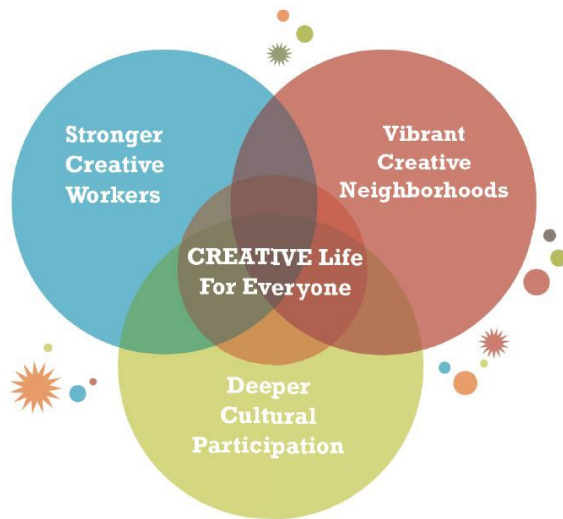
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Metro Human Relations Commission, 150 2nd Ave N., Suite 217, 37201 P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219-6300

About Metro Arts Grants

A Creative Life For Everyone



Metro Arts' Grants Program funds nonprofit organizations of all sizes through Metro Council funding of the arts. Our Grants Program funds organizations engaged in work that addresses one or more of the community outcomes we seek to achieve:

- + Stronger Creative Workforce
- + Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods
- + Deeper Cultural Participation

Metro Arts is guided by a [cultural equity statement](#). Our grants program, along with all Metro Arts programs, seeks to make opportunities and resources available to all Nashvillians in an equitable way.

Our Mission

Metro Nashville Arts Commission or "Metro Arts" is the office of Arts & Culture for the city of Nashville and Davidson County. We believe that arts drive a more vibrant and equitable community. We strive to ensure that all Nashvillians have access to a creative life through community investments, artist and organizational training, public art, and direct programs that involve residents in all forms of arts and culture. Metro Nashville Arts Commission was established in 1978 by Metro Charter.

Grant Eligibility Criteria

All funding approvals and levels are contingent on the budget allocated to Metro Arts.

Operating Support grants provide funding for the general operations of arts-focused nonprofit organizations based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County. An arts-focused organization is one whose primary mission is to directly support the performance, exhibition, or instruction of art. The word 'art' here refers to a number of artistic genres including dance, folk + traditional arts, literary arts, media arts, music, performance art, theater, and visual arts. Please contact Metro Arts staff if you have questions regarding the definition of an "arts-focused organization."

To receive an operating grant support from Metro Arts, the applicant must:

- Produce, present or directly support artistic programs, projects or works
- Have a primary mission to directly support the performance, exhibition, or instruction of art

- Be chartered in the state of Tennessee and tax-exempt under the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)
- Have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier for Operating Grants*
- Have a business address located in Metro Nashville & Davidson County and operate most of its programs in Metro Nashville
- Have evidence of non-discrimination employment and personnel practices in place
- Applicants must adopt an equity statement within the next 2 fiscal years

There are certain types of organizations that cannot receive operating grants from Metro Arts. They are:

- Non-arts organizations
- Organizations who receive operational budget amendments ("line items") from Metro, except for those that are provided by the Metropolitan Charter
- "Friends of..." organizations whose primary purpose is to support government agencies or initiatives
- Colleges or universities
- Public broadcasting stations
- Arts organizations that operate as a legal subsidiary of a non-art nonprofit organization

*Metro Arts will review additional grant eligibility issues not listed here on a case-by-case basis. Organizations with less than one year 501(c)(3) status may be considered eligible for operating support with evidence of operating with nonprofit fiscal sponsorship and/or artistic programming for at least one year. Please contact Metro Arts staff with any questions regarding eligibility.

Eligible Expenses

Metro Arts grant funding can only be used to pay for certain types of costs. Make sure your request includes expenses that can be covered by Metro Arts funds.

Grant funds CAN be used for...	Grant funds CANNOT be used for...
Salaries	Capital Improvements
Artist Fees	Reduction of Debts
Program/Project Supplies	Activities & Programs with Religious Practices or Intent
Performance Space/Facility Rental	Political Lobbying Activities
Marketing and Promotion	Purchase of Real Property
Consulting Fees	
Equipment Rental and/or Purchase	
Fundraising Activities	

Grant Cycle Time Frame

All eligible FY25 grant activities must take place between the time of the award and June 1, 2025. Final reports and closeout forms are due June 15, 2025.

Grant Payment Schedule

Applicants awarded a grant will be required to submit a brief FY25 budget during the contract phase. Awarded grant funds are distributed, upon Metro's receipt of grantee's signed contract, in one payment for the full grant amount. Awarded funds are distributed after execution of the grant contract. Please note that the contracting process typically takes 4-6 weeks as contracts require multiple signatures from Metro Government. Grantee-organizations must return their signed contract and grant spending plan promptly for grant funds to be distributed.

Matching Funds

Metro Arts Operating Support Grant awards do not require a cash match. Grantees are not required to show matching expenses.

Grant Categories

For the FY25 grant cycle, Metro Arts will only provide operating support grants to eligible nonprofit arts organizations within Davidson County. For project support, please see Thrive Grant Guidelines and Criteria.

Organization's budget size and the most recently completed fiscal year's revenue are considered when determining the appropriate grant category for each applicant. The information in the following pages will help you understand which grant category is the best fit for your organization. **Please note Metro Arts is using the data from the original application submitted by January 29, 2024.**

Micro Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue of **less than \$25,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Small Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$25,000 to \$100,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Medium Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$100,000 and \$500,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Mid-Size Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue between **\$500,000 and \$3,000,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Large Organizations – Represents the overall operations of nonprofit arts organizations that are based in Metro Nashville-Davidson County and had revenue **greater than \$3,000,000** during the most recently completed fiscal year. To qualify for an Operating Support Grant, organizations must have an IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.

Award Amounts

All funding approvals and levels are contingent on the budget allocated to Metro Arts. Award amounts are based on the organization's operating revenue as shown in the organization's most recently completed fiscal year IRS Form 990, and will range within the grant category they fall in. Award amounts will be determined by scaling the allocated budget across organizations.

1. Eligible Micro organizations will be awarded a minimum of \$3,000 to a maximum of 75% of \$25,000 (or \$18,750).
2. Eligible Small organizations will be awarded a minimum of \$3,000 to a maximum of 50% of \$100,000 (or \$50,000).
3. Eligible Medium organizations will be awarded a maximum of 25% of \$500,000 (or \$125,000).
4. Eligible Mid-Size organizations will be awarded a maximum of 17% of \$3,000,000 (or \$120,000).
5. Eligible Large organizations will be awarded a maximum of 1.8% of their operating budget with a maximum of \$200,000.

How to Update an Existing Online Application

Metro Arts utilizes an online application system called Submittable. All applications must be completed and submitted using this system. The Metro Arts grant application portal can be accessed at <https://mnac.submittable.com/submit>. **Only applications previously submitted by Monday, January 29, 2024, 11:59 PM will be eligible to update the original grant application.** Keep in mind that submitted applications are considered public record and can be reviewed by the public. An application may be disqualified at any time if an organization, proposal, or project is deemed ineligible.

Original applications will be retained, and updates are only necessary if your organization has undergone significant change, such as new leadership or major changes in programming or organizational focus. Resubmissions are not required if there are no updates.

Application Deadlines

All applicants with completed application from the original deadline will have the opportunity to update their application, if needed. Updated information must be submitted by February 18, 2025, 11:59 P.M. After that time, any in-process applications cannot be resubmitted for review. **Please resubmit if needed early to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.**

Application Checklist (submitted by original deadline)

- ☐ Read the FY25 Operating Support Grant Guidelines
- ☐ If you have any questions, please contact arts.grants@nashville.gov
- ☐ Upload required attachment, copy of 990, 990N, 990EZ Postcard. Organizations new to Metro Arts funding will need to attach a copy of their IRS Letter of Determination with an effective date of exemption of January 15, 2024, or earlier.
- ☐ Submit application

Application Deadlines

All applicants with completed application from the original deadline will have the opportunity to update their application as needed. An updated submission is not required, except in the case of a significant change to the organization since the original submission. Updated information must be submitted by February 18, 2025, 11:59 P.M After that time, any in-process applications cannot be resubmitted for review. **Please resubmit if needed early to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.**

Important Dates

Update and resubmit applications, if needed	January 22 - February 18, 2025
Staff technical review	February –19-21, 2025
Application scoring by review panelists	February 24 - 25, 2025
Grants Committee approval	February 26-27
Commission approval	February 26-27
Contracts signed and awarded	March 2025
Grant period	Spring 2025 -June15, 2025
Final spend date	June 1, 2025
Final completion and closeout report due	June 15, 2025

****The effective date of grant contracts will be the date RS2025-961 is filed with the Metro Clerk***

Funding Determination

All grant applications are reviewed for technical eligibility by Metro Arts staff. Applicants scores are determined by a team of grant review panelist. Eligibility verification reviews containing panelist notes are kept electronically by Metro Arts. After the grant awards are announced, you may contact Metro Arts staff to get a copy of these scores and comments for your records.

Funding Criteria + Scoring

Panelists will use a Panelist Scoring Guide to evaluate each application.

Funding Formula

Access to resources and funding is a privilege. By honoring budget size in the formula, there is acknowledgement that smaller organizations have less access to resources and funding and require greater support of their total operating budget. Only applicants whose applications score at the **70 to 100 percent level** will be awarded funds in alignment with the base percentage for their funding category, scaled to the amount allocated to operating grants. **Award allocations will be made based on Metro Arts funding availability.**

Funding Approval

The panelists' scores and recommendations are reviewed by the Grants and Funding Committee and are used to determine which applications should be awarded funding. Lastly, the Metro Arts Commission reviews all recommended grant awards before voting to approve.

All commissioners and panelists are asked to disclose any conflicts of interest prior to approving grant allocations. Metro Arts makes every attempt to identify any conflicts in advance. If a conflict of interest is identified, a commissioner will be asked to abstain from allocating an organization's funding.

Appeals

An organization can submit an appeal to the Commission to change their vote only if the applicant believes there was a problem with the grant process. To file an appeal, email the Metro Arts Executive Director with the basis and specifics of your appeal. The appeal procedures are outlined below:

- + The Interim Executive Director of Metro Arts must receive the appeal in writing within fifteen (15) days of the announcement of the funding decision.
- + Each written appeal must specifically state the exact nature of the claim. Written appeals that do not specifically provide this information will be dismissed summarily.
- + The Interim Director will bring the appeal to the Commission for review within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the appeal, or the next scheduled meeting.
- + The Commission will review and vote on the appeal.

Managing an Awarded Grant

Award Notification

Grant award notifications will be emailed to the contact person listed in the application. Instructions for signing contracts are sent via email after funding decisions are made. Grantees are responsible for notifying the proper channels for any changes in address or contact information. If you have any questions, please contact arts.grants@nashville.gov. The contracting process typically takes 4-6 weeks as contracts require multiple signatures from Metro Government.

Grant awards will also be publicly announced via press release.

Mid- Point Check in

Given the abbreviated grant period, Metro Arts staff will check-in with grant recipients as it allows both the recipient and Metro Arts to ensure the project is progressing well and confirms that funds are being used in alignment with the grant's objectives before the project's completion.

Final Closeout Report

Final closeout reports and all supporting materials must be submitted by June 15, 2025. The final closeout report includes program goals, outputs and outcomes; participant demographic information; jobs supported; and other metrics specific to the grant category. The report also includes detailed financial information about grant expenses. Organizations must maintain financial records that clearly show the use of all grant funds. Metro Arts staff will provide more information about the final report as part of the award notification process.

We understand that proposed budgets may change. All program and/or budget changes must be submitted as a contract amendment request at the earliest possible date. Please contact the Strategic Grant & Initiative Manager at Arts.Grants@nashville.gov to request a contract amendment.

Metro Arts will either approve or disapprove the change. We will make every attempt to allow reasonable adjustments, **but given the shortened grant period, it is preferred that updates to the application will have incorporated anticipated changes.** Metro Arts reserves the right to cancel any grant contract if the project is not administered as proposed in the application and may request the return of all or a portion of the grant funds awarded. Please note that if an expense shows a variation of more than 10% from what is included application budget, the grantee's Final Financial Reports will be returned for corrections. At Metro Arts' request, each grantee may be asked to provide documentation of expenditures including, but not limited to, letters of agreement, contracts, purchase orders, invoices, and bills.

Logo Usage and Credit Policy

All recipients of Metro Arts funds are required to include the Metro Arts logo on all online or printed publicity materials. The credit policy and logo files are available on the [Partner Tools | Metro Arts Nashville](#) page of the Metro Arts website.

Maintaining Good Standing

Remaining in good standing with Metro Arts is very important. A grantee maintains good standing by:

- Meeting all requirements stated in the guidelines and grant contract (including spending grant funds as described in the grant contract)
- Following the [Metro Arts logo and credit policy](#)
- Submitting grant information (including contracts, final financial reports, closeout reports, and any other information that Metro Arts may request) on or before the stated deadline
- Communicating project or budget changes in a timely manner

An organization's subsequent grant application may be denied eligibility if these requirements are not met.

If an organization loses its good standing status for any of the reasons above, the organization will be sent documentation in writing of what requirements have not been met and what steps need to be

taken to return to good standing status. If an organization is not in good standing at the at the end of a grant cycle, future grant funds may be withheld until such time as the identified issues are resolved.

Monitoring

As a department of Metro government receiving federal funds, Metro Arts is required to review and monitor up to 10% of distributed funds annually. If an organization is selected for monitoring, a site visit with Metro Arts staff will be scheduled at which time the organization may be asked to provide:

- Year-to-date grant expenditures
- Payment records
- Payroll records
- Electronic and printed promotional materials showing Metro Arts logo usage according to the Metro Arts Credit Policy.

Metro Arts will provide a detailed list of items that will need to be collected and reviewed prior to the scheduled site visit. A written report of the monitoring visit will be provided to the organization after the review is complete. Metro Arts staff may report negative findings to the Arts Commission. Unresolved or recurring negative findings will result in a change to the organization's good standing status.

Operational Support Grant Scoring Rubric

APPLICATION SECTIONS

Submittable Profile Data: Maintaining a profile on this site is a requirement of all Metro Arts applicants. The profile provides a substantial overview of the nonprofit that includes its mission, background, recent accomplishments, program descriptions, governance, senior leadership, and financial history. Profiles provide reviewers with a snapshot of the history and current operations of the organization applying for funding. Submittable.com profiles are included as attachments to the application.

The Art: All answers in this section address artistic and cultural merit. Components discussed here will include the type of artistic genres that will be used in programming, qualifications of the lead artist(s), how standards will be defined, and what artistic goals/outcomes the program or organization will produce.

The Community: Answers provided in this section describe the organization's ability to engage the community effectively. Answers should include evidence that the organization understands the community it is trying to serve, evidence that the program offerings are something that fills an artistic/cultural need, and that the program has been developed with a focus on arts access.

The Organization: This section of the application addresses the organization's overall health as a nonprofit organization. Much of the information used to score this section is found in the Submittable.com profile. Areas that influence the overall health of a nonprofit are the size and make-up of the governing board of directors, qualifications and abilities of staff, leadership demographics in relation to the population being served, regular organizational assessment, and short and long-term goal setting.

Equity: This section of the application addresses the organization’s demonstrated commitment to racial and cultural equity in its programs, organizational policies and practices, planning, and implementation.

Financial Health Assessment: This section of the application will be adjudicated by a qualified accountant or other financial professional. Their scores will be based on a review of the organization’s financial reports from the most recently completed fiscal years and the responses provided in the financial health assessment questions. The overall assessment will gauge the financial stability of the organization. **Grant panelists do not review this section.**

RANKING AND ALLOCATIONS

After the panel review meeting, Metro Arts staff will combine all the panelists’ scores from the review meeting, add the Financial Health score to that number, and assign a total score to each application. The Grants Committee reviews the allocations and then sends those on to the full Commission for approval. Awards are announced immediately following Commission approval.

HOW TO ASSIGN A SCORE

A numeric score to each section of the application: The Art, The Community, The Organization, and Equity. The numeric ranges shown here correlate with the scoring descriptions described below.

Inadequate	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

Exceptional: The applicant *comprehensively* addresses an identifiable artistic/cultural need in the community. The applicant has provided *overwhelming* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that all the funding criteria are met. The plans are clear, well-articulated, and appropriate. The budget is realistic, comprehensive, and carefully aligned with the narrative.

Strong: The applicant *strongly* addresses an identifiable artistic/cultural need in the community. The applicant has provided *clear* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that all the funding criteria are met. The plans are clear, well-articulated, and appropriate. The budget is realistic, comprehensive, and carefully aligned with the narrative.

Good: The applicant *partially* addresses an identifiable artistic/cultural need in the community. The applicant has provided *adequate* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that all the funding criteria are met. The plans are clear and appropriate but are not well-expressed. The budget is realistic and reasonably aligned with the narrative.

Fair: The applicant *narrowly* addresses an identifiable artistic/cultural need in the community. The applicant has provided *insufficient* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates that all the funding criteria are met. The plans are appropriate, but with limited detail. The budget is incomplete or is not well aligned with the narrative.

Inadequate: The applicant *does not* address an identifiable artistic/cultural need in the community. The applicant has *not* provided any evidence in the application that demonstrates that the funding criteria are met. The plans are not appropriate and/or are lacking details. The budget is incomplete and/or does not align with the narrative.

THE ART <i>Scoring Criteria</i>		
Artistic + Cultural Merit	Artistic Vision	Creative Workforce
• Describes the unique artistic components, genres, and/or creative elements of the project • Lead artists demonstrate mastery of skills and deep understanding of the genre and cultural standards of the specific art form and associated culture supported by history of practice and/or relationship to the specific arts community • Expands the artistic and cultural knowledge of artistic leaders and participants • Innovatively addresses an artistic/cultural need	• Develops creative and relevant artistic and cultural programs that are aligned with the organization's mission, vision, and goals. • Articulates specific artistic goals/outcomes • Utilizes an approach/process that details the creative content of the project	• Shows evidence of employing qualified artists and program leaders • Engages supporting artists and program leaders who have applicable experience and cultural knowledge • Includes a wide range of artists, creators, and project staff from a variety of backgrounds

THE ORGANIZATION <i>Criteria</i>			
Planning	Leadership	Governance	Assessment
• Project/programs align with organization's overall mission • Financial plan is appropriate for the size and scope of project or programs • Staffing plans are realistic and sustainable	• Executive director and senior program officers have applicable experience, expertise, and are reflective of the community it serves as stated in its mission or other strategic documents. • Recruits, evaluates, and retains a wide	• Cultivates a board of directors that is reflective of the community it serves as stated in its mission or other strategic documents. • Board of directors provides sound leadership and substantial financial support	• Utilizes a board-approved strategic plan that regularly evaluates programs and processes for efficiency, professionalism, quality, and effectiveness • Creates and implements policies and procedures that

Is financially stable and has a plan for avoiding operating deficits	range of administrative and program staff that are reflective of the community it serves as stated in its mission or other strategic documents.		increases equity and sustainability within the organization
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THE COMMUNITY <i>Scoring Criteria</i>		
Accessible to the Community	Understands the Community	Benefits the Community
- Project times, locations, facilities and technology are accessible to the public - Considers affordability in program development and/or offers free admission, scholarships, or sliding scale options - Engages participants through a variety of means	- Understands the community it serves (geographical, cultural, economic, racial, educational relevance, etc.) - Utilizes partnerships to effectively serve specific communities - Collects participant feedback and uses the results to improve community-focused programming	- Demonstrates social, educational, cultural and/or economic relevance for the community - Fosters deeper participation in arts and culture activities - Contributes to vibrant, creative neighborhoods - Engages a strong base of community volunteers to help the organization achieve its mission

EQUITY <i>Scoring Criteria</i>		
Underrepresented People	Practice and Policy	Planning and Implementation
Organization's program(s) exhibits commitment to people who have been historically underrepresented in mainstream arts funding, discourse, leadership and resource allocation.	- Organization demonstrates commitment to equity through trainings, discussions, or other opportunities - Organization has policies, practices, or strategic documents in place that address diversity, equity, and inclusion	Program(s) design and components move past simple representation and addresses the unequal nature of voice, resource allocation and visibility that exist in the arts and cultural ecosystem demonstrated by involvement in planning, performance, and/or facilitation.

FINANCIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Forms 990, Audited Financial Statements, and narrative answers from the Financial Health section of each application are reviewed by a qualified financial professional or team of financial professionals. Community Grant Panelists do not review this section.

Inadequate	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5

FINANCIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Scoring Criteria

Operating Support	
• Revenue Dynamics: Does the organization have diverse revenue streams? Are these revenue streams reliable? • Expense Dynamics: Are expenses right sized with the size and scope of the organization? Do changes in expenses match with changes in revenue? • Balance Sheet Composition: Does this organization have positive net assets? Are the net assets mostly unrestricted? If there is debt, is debt COVID related? Is there a realistic repayment plan in place? • Sustainability: If funded, will org be able to operate for at least 6 months? Has organization demonstrated ability to maintain programs in previous year and through next year?	• Revenue and Expenses: Has the organization had positive net assets in the last 2 fiscal years? If not, was pandemic related and addressed in the financial narrative? (2 points) • Sustainability: Has the organization shown sustainability over time? Are they in a place to continue offering programs for the next fiscal year? • Financial Practices: Is the board regularly apprised of budget to actuals? Does the organization use an accounting system to manage money? Does the organization have a plan for handling cash flow issues?

For further assistance, please contact Sydnie Davis, Strategic Grants & Initiatives Manager

| arts.grants@nashville.gov



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Thrive Project Grant Criteria & Guidelines

FY25 GRANT CYCLE | FOR ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE Spring 2025

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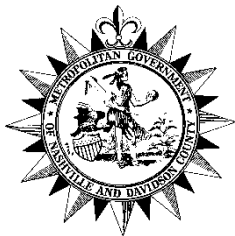
P.O. Box 196300

Nashville TN 37219-6300

615.862.6720 phone | 615.862.6731 fax

arts@nashville.gov | metroartsnashville.com

@metroartsnash on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter



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Nondiscrimination Policies, ADA Compliance & Accessibility

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إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لغوية ، فالرجاء إخبارنا بذلك. سوف نحصل على مترجم يمكنه مساعدتنا في التواصل مع بعضنا البعض.

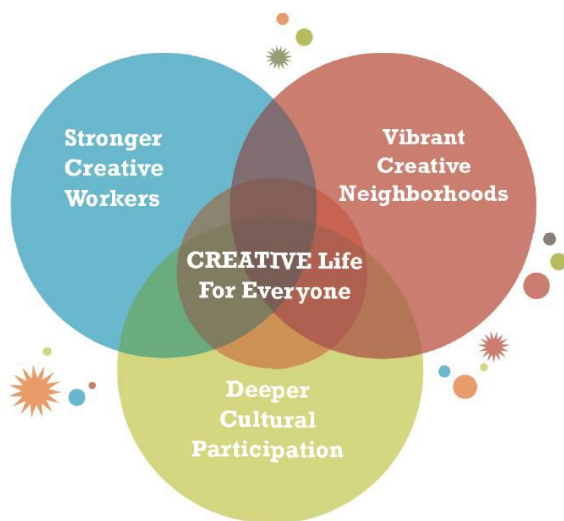
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About Metro Arts Grants

A Creative Life For Everyone



Metro Arts' Grants Program funds nonprofit organizations of all sizes and Thrive project-based grants through funding allocated by the Metro Council. Our Grants Programs support creative work that addresses one or more of the community outcomes we seek to achieve:

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- + Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods
- + Deeper Cultural Participation

Metro Arts is guided by a [cultural equity statement](#). Metro Arts programs seek to make opportunities and resources available to all Nashvillians in an equitable way.

About Metro Arts:

Metro Nashville Arts Commission or "Metro Arts" is the office of Arts & Culture for the city of Nashville and Davidson County. Metro Arts is a branch of Metro Government that strives to ensure that all Nashvillians have access to a creative life through community investments, artist and organizational training, public art and creative placemaking coordination, and direct programs. We believe that arts drive a more vibrant and equitable community. Metro Nashville Arts Commission was started in 1978 by [Metro Charter](#).

Thrive Community-Based Art Projects

Metro Arts' Thrive grant connects artists and/or organizations with the community to create investments, cultural connections, and transformations. Thrive empowers artists and organizations to strengthen and cultivate communities in Davidson County. Thrive supports artist-led, community-based art projects that include collaboration between artists and community partners and organizations. This category is open to individual artists, nonprofit organizations, and art collectives or teams. Individual artists, art collectives, or community organization(s) with lead artists or artist teams may apply (see details in criteria section).

Thrive Project proposals must include:

- + Project narrative
- + Project budget narrative
- + In order to create a more equitable process, you may provide answers to the application

narrative questions by one of three ways:

- Written
- Audio recording, limit of five (5) minutes
- Video recording, limit of five (5) minutes

Thrive Community Public Art Projects

Thrive Community Public Art is defined as a temporary artwork that exists in a public space that is accessible to the public, including privately owned property such as a local business or organization. Thrive public art projects have included murals, sculptures, integrated architectural or landscape architectural work, community art, digital new media, etc.

Upon staff review, in addition to the proposal requirements above, Thrive Community Public Art Projects may require the following supplemental information:

- + Proposed site with photo(s)
- + 3 images of past works
- + A site owner agreement with proposed maintenance determination
- + Proposed lifespan of project
- + Artist bio(s)

Additional Requirements

- + All Thrive projects are open and accessible to the public
- + All Thrive projects must obtain all permits, licenses, and permissions necessary for their project and comply with all applicable laws and regulations
- + Funding is available only for artists living and/or working in Nashville/Davidson County
- + **Only one submission per applicant. Multiple submissions will not be accepted.**
 - If you serve as the lead artist or applicant on multiple applications, you must select one application for consideration. Failure to do so will result in all submitted applications being deemed ineligible at technical review. Metro Arts staff will notify applicants who are deemed to have more than one application. Please carefully review your submissions and ensure that only one application is submitted to avoid disqualification.

Projects Engaging Youth

- + Projects proposing to work directly with youth (defined as persons under age 18) will be required to submit background checks for each individual working directly with youth. Applicants are expected to facilitate this and provide this documentation, along with any other required documentation.
 - This includes lead artist, any contract / temporary artists, or organizational staff. This is a requirement for both Thrive and Operational Support Grant Applicants. If your organization already has documentation of background checks conducted through your HR department or affiliated organizations within the past 2 years, you may submit those. If no background check documentation is currently available, you are required to find a service and submit the necessary background check documentation **before the application resubmission period closes on February 18, 2025**

Resubmitting an existing Thrive Project Proposal

Proposals should be completed on the [Metro Arts Submittable portal](#). A completed FY25 Thrive project proposal will include the lead artist, supporting artists, funding request, project budget, completed narratives, and fiscal agent documentation (if needed). Eligible projects will be reviewed by a grant review panel and ranked/awarded based on the scoring rubric and available funding.

Application Deadlines

All applicants with completed application from the original deadline will have the opportunity to update their application as needed. Updated information must be submitted by February 18, 2025, 11:59 P.M After that time, any in-process applications cannot be resubmitted for review. Applicants may certify a resubmission is complete prior February 18th, 2025. **Please resubmit early, if needed, to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.**

Criteria for Thrive Project Funding Eligibility

Successful projects will align with Metro Arts' mission and Thrive goals and objectives by:

- + Impacting neighborhoods or communities
- + Actively engaging residents through community input in project planning, decision-making and artmaking
- + Exhibiting and promoting cultural equity in project design, process, and content

To receive a Thrive grant from Metro Arts, the applicant must be:

- + An individual artist
 - o Artists are defined as practitioners in the following disciplines: Dance, Film & Media Arts, Craft, Literary Arts, Music, Multidisciplinary Works, Theater, and Visual Arts.
 - o Artists must be 18 years of age or older.
 - o Artists must live or primarily work in Davidson County.
- + Artist Collectives
 - o Artist Collectives are art organizations or neighborhood groups that do not hold nonprofit 501c3 status
 - o Artist Collectives must have an artist identified to lead the project.
 - o Artist Collectives must be located in Davidson County.
- + Non-profit organizations
 - o Organizations must be located in Davidson County.
 - o Organizations must not be eligible for an Operating Support Grant.
 - o Organizations must have a professional artist identified to lead the project.

Individuals that cannot receive a Thrive Grant

- + Employees of Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County or Metro Nashville Public Schools.

- + Members of the Metro Nashville Arts Commission or Public Art Committee, or a submission with immediate family or household members who are serving in these roles.
- + Elected officials of Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

Metro Arts will review additional grant criteria eligibility issues not listed here on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Metro Arts staff with any questions regarding eligibility.

Eligible Expenses

Metro Arts grant funding can only be used to pay for certain expenses. Make sure your request includes expenses that can be covered by Metro Arts funds.

Thrive Project Funds can be used for:

- + Artist Fees
- + Project/Supply/Venue fees

Thrive Project Funds CANNOT be used for:

- + Payments to any individual employed by Metro Nashville government or Metro Nashville Public Schools, or payments to any individual serving on the Metro Public Art Committee or the Metro Arts Commission
- + Capital improvements, purchase of real property
- + Reduction of debts
- + Activities or programs with religious intent, study, or practices
- + Political lobbying activities

New in FY25: Fiscal Agent + Thrive Project Grants

For the FY25 cycle, the Thrive program will comply with state and local policies requiring grants to be awarded to nonprofit organizations. Applicants who are not registered Tennessee 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations must work with a fiscal agent to receive Metro Arts Thrive Project funding.

Applicants may select their own fiscal agent or choose from a list of fiscal agents provided by Metro Arts. Fiscal agents may charge an administrative fee for this service. The maximum allowable fee is 10% of the total award amount. Fiscal agents are not required to charge a fee. Any fee will be determined between the applicant and the fiscal agent and included in the Letter of Agreement. Fiscal agents and applicants must complete a Letter of Agreement outlining their respective roles and responsibilities, including fund disbursement, reporting, and other logistics. Fiscal Agent will execute a letter to Metro affirming their intent to be a fiscal agent for the specific grantee. A resource guide including these required documents are available on the Metro Arts Thrive website.

Fiscal Agent Eligibility as a Grantee

- + Serving as a Fiscal Agent for Thrive artists does not disqualify an organization from receiving an Operating Grant or its own Thrive grant.

Grantee Timeline

As noted in the table below, grantees will have until February 18th, 2025 to edit grant proposals and applications to meet the new requirements, upload required documents, and resubmit.

Updates and changes include:

- + Letters of Fiscal Agency (from Fiscal Agent to Metro) and Letter of Agreement (Agreement between grantee and Fiscal Agent).
- + Any updates needed to complete the projects that were previously submitted. Changes may include adjusted timelines, different project goals, different community partners, etc. Metro Arts will consider any project changes that meet the Thrive requirements described above.
- + Updated proposed budget (if applicable). Fiscal agents will receive 100% of the grant upon execution of the grant contract. Organizations and applicants may include a negotiated draw schedule in their Letter of Agreement.
- + If an applicant is selected to receive an award, a grant spending plan which matches the award amount will be required as part of the contracting process.

Important Dates

Update and resubmit applications	January 22 - February 18, 2025
Staff technical review	February 19 - 21, 2025
Application scoring by review panelists	February 24 - 25, 2025
Grants Committee approval	February 26 – 27, 2025
Commission approval	February 26 – 27, 2025
Contracts signed and awarded	Early March
Grant period	Spring 2025 – June 15, 2025
Final spend date	June 1, 2025
Final completion and closeout report due	June 15, 2025

****The effective date of grant contracts will be the date RS2025-961 is filed with the Metro Clerk***

Funding Determination

All grant applications are reviewed for eligibility by Metro Arts staff through the technical review. Applications are then scored by a community grant review panel. Funding determinations are based on the application's score and the available funding. Eligibility verification reviews and panelist notes are kept electronically by Metro Arts. After the grant awards are announced, applicants may contact Metro Arts to get a copy of these scores and comments.

Funding Criteria + Scoring

Panelists will use a Panelist Scoring Guide to evaluate each application. Please see the scoring rubric below.

Funding Formula

Thrive grants will be awarded at 75% of the requested amount in the application. The funding model is a rank ordering of applications. Funding is then based on awarding 75% of the application request. The funding process is as follows:

- + Each approved project is eligible for 75% of its requested amount
- + Applications are scored and ranked from highest to lowest
- + Funding is distributed in rank order, starting with the highest-scoring applications, until all available funds are used.
- + Any remaining funds will be evenly distributed among eligible Thrive awardees, so long as the total award does not exceed the original amount requested
- + In case of tied scores: If there are not enough remaining funds to support all applications with tied scores, two Metro Arts staff members who weren't involved in the FY25 grants process will:
 - o Conduct a second review of the tied applications
 - o Create a new ranking of these applications
 - o Distribute the remaining funds based on this secondary ranking

Funding Approval

The panelists' scores and recommendations are reviewed by the Grants and Funding Committee and are used to determine which applications should be awarded funding. Lastly, the Metro Arts Commission approves grant awards.

All commissioners and panelists are asked to disclose any conflicts of interest prior to approving grant allocations. Metro Arts makes every attempt to identify any conflicts in advance. If a conflict of interest is identified, a commissioner will be asked to abstain from allocating an organization's funding.

Grants and Funding Committee meetings, Metro Nashville Arts Commission meetings, and Metro Council meetings are open to the public. Visit the upcoming Metro Arts meetings page on the Nashville.gov website for more information.

Appeals

An organization can submit an appeal to the Metro Arts Commission to change their vote if the applicant believes there was a problem with the grant process. To file an appeal, email the Metro Arts Executive Director with the basis and specifics of your appeal. The appeal procedures are outlined below:

- + The Interim Executive Director of Metro Arts must receive the appeal in writing within fifteen (15) days of the announcement of the funding decision.
- + The Interim Executive Director will bring the appeal to the Commission for review within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the appeal. Each written appeal must specifically state the exact nature of the claim. Written appeals that do not specifically provide this information will be dismissed summarily. The Commission will review and vote on the appeal at the next scheduled meeting.

Managing an Awarded Grant

Award Notification

Grant award notifications will be emailed to the contact person listed in the application and fiscal agent, if applicable. Grantees are responsible for notifying of any changes in the address or contact information. If you have any questions, please contact arts.grants@nashville.gov. The contracting process typically takes 4-6 weeks as contracts require multiple signatures from Metro Government. Completed vendor forms will be required for first time award recipients and fiscal agents. Updated vendor forms will be required for change of address and banking information changes.

Thrive Project Award Terms

Grants recipients agree to the following terms:

- + Recipient will use funds to pay for artist fees, project coordination and supplies and materials that support the project as described in the proposal.
- + Recipient will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- + Recipient will obtain all permits, licenses, and permissions necessary for the project. The failure to provide these documents could potentially place the artist, artist collective, or community group or organization in bad standing for consideration of future funding. Metro Nashville Government and any of its entities will not be held accountable for the failure to have these documents when required.
- + Recipient will collect and report project data as detailed in the Final Closeout Report.
- + In all publicity, promotions and/or printed materials related to the project, the recipient will credit Metro Arts according to the Credit and Logo Usage Guidelines.
- + Up to 10% of funded Thrive projects will be audited; additional documentation, receipts and/or invoices may be requested.
- + If the project fails to occur, or after mid-point monitoring the applicant is found to be out of compliance, subsequent applications for support may be ineligible.
- + Failure to complete requested closeout information may affect future Metro Arts submissions.

Mid – Point Check-in

Given the abbreviated grant period, Metro Arts staff will check-in with grant recipients as it allows both the recipient and Metro Arts to ensure the project is progressing well and confirms that funds are being used in alignment with the grant's objectives before the project's completion.

Final Closeout Report

Final Thrive Project Grant reports are due on or before June 15, 2025. Grantees should be prepared to report on program goals, outputs, and outcomes, participant demographic information, jobs supported, and other metrics depending on grant category. The final closeout report will also include detailed financial information about grant expenses. Metro Arts staff will provide more information about the final report as part of the award notification process. Organizations must maintain financial records that clearly show the use of all grant funds. Grantees must submit all required documents and reports by the dates determined

by Metro Arts.

We understand that proposed budgets may change. All program and/or budget changes must be submitted as a contract amendment request in the Submittable system as soon as possible. Contact the Metro Arts Grants team at arts.grants@nashville.gov if you have questions about submitting a contract amendment. Metro Arts will either approve or disapprove the change. We will make every attempt to allow reasonable adjustments. Metro Arts reserves the right to cancel any grant contract if the project is not administered as proposed in the application and may request the return of all or a portion of the grant funds awarded.

Please note that if an expense shows a variation of more than 10% from what is included application budget, the grantee's Final Financial Reports will be returned for corrections. At Metro Arts' request, each grantee may be asked to provide documentation of expenditures including, but not limited to, letters of agreement, contracts, purchase orders, invoices, and bills. **The artist and fiscal agent will be responsible for completing all reporting requirements. The fiscal agent must review the reports to ensure they are complete and accurate. If any errors or omissions are identified, both the artist/collective and the fiscal agent share the responsibility for addressing and resolving the issues.**

Logo Usage and Credit Policy

All recipients of Metro Arts funds are required to include the Metro Arts logo on all online or printed publicity materials. The credit policy and logo files are available on the [Partner Tools | Metro Arts Nashville](#) page of the Metro Arts website.

Maintaining Good Standing

Remaining in good standing with Metro Arts is very important. A grantee maintains good standing by meeting all requirements stated in the guidelines and grant contract, including spending grant funds as described in the grant contract, following the logo and credit policy, and submitting grant information, documents, and reports on or before the stated deadline. These items include contracts, final financial reports, closeout reports, and any other information as requested. An organization's subsequent grant application may be denied eligibility if any of the following are not met according to the stated instructions:

- Final Close out Report and Performance Metrics Report
- [Metro Arts logo and credit policy](#)
- Timely communication related to project or budget changes
- Completion of grant activities and disbursement of grant funds according to grant contract, as indicated in closeout report materials

If an organization loses its good standing status for any of the reasons above, the organization will be sent documentation in writing of what requirements have not been met and what steps need to be taken to return to good standing. If an organization is not in good standing at the end of a grant cycle, future grant contracts may be held until issues may be resolved.

Monitoring

As a department of Metro government receiving federal funds, Metro Arts is required to review and monitor up to 10% of distributed funds annually. Grantees are randomly selected to be monitored. If your project is selected, you will be notified in advance, and a meeting time will be arranged for the Metro Arts staff to conduct a site visit. You will be asked to provide year-to-date grant expenditures, payment records, payroll records and electronic and printed promotional materials showing Metro Arts logo usage according to the Metro Arts Credit Policy. Metro Arts will provide a detailed list of items that will need to be collected and reviewed prior to the scheduled site visit. A written report of the monitoring visit will be provided to the organization after the review is complete. Metro Arts staff may report negative findings to the Arts Commission. Unresolved or recurring negative findings will result in a change to the organization's good standing status.

For further assistance, please contact Sydnie Davis, Strategic Grants & Initiatives Manager |
arts.grants@nashville.gov

Thrive Project Grant Scoring Rubric

What will be supported by this funding and how will the community and/or the artist be impacted?

Demonstrates significant impact (community impact and/or artist value or benefit clearly connected to needs and aspirations).	Demonstrates some impact (community impact and/or artist value that is sometimes connected to needs and aspirations).	Demonstrates minimal impact.	
Outstanding	Satisfactory	Fair	No Evidence

What is the timeline for the proposal?

Timeline as it relates to planning, promotion, implementation, and reflection.	Timeline with minimal details.	
Outstanding	Fair	No Evidence

What is the budget and how will the Metro Arts funding be used? Include a list of all projected expenses.

Financial information is tied to the proposal and indicates realistic expenses for implementation.	Limited financial information tied to the proposal.	
Outstanding	Fair	No Evidence

Revised Timeline for FY25 Grant Cycle

Date	Benchmark/event	Description/notes
January 2- February 18	Community engagement; staff technical reviews	Every day during this period Metro Arts staff should hold office hours and engagement for potential fiscal sponsors, Thrive applicants, and operating grants applicants. For Thrive: Every Thrive applicant is sent an email that informs them of the office hours and engagement opportunities. Applicants are also contacted individually by phone (using a script or a guide), and points of contact and results are tracked using a spreadsheet. A similar process could take place for operating grant applicants. Additionally, staff should conduct preliminary technical reviews of Operating grant applications during this time. Preliminary Technical reviews for Thrive applications will enable applicants to get quick feedback. A second technical review later will confirm the additions/revisions to the application (fiscal sponsor, the adjusted projects qualify, etc.).
January 6	Legislation filed with finance	Because of the condition of the current documents and potential challenges with the Thrive model, substitute legislation that addresses errors and the need for classification will be filed by January 17.
January 13	MHRC Commission meeting	At this commission meeting, a detailed update to MHRC commissioners on the policies voted on in Dec by Arts will be on the agenda. Metro Arts Commissioners will be invited and encouraged to attend this meeting
January 15	Grants Committee meeting: Amending legislation	1) It is possible that the shortened timeline, the \$10,000 cap, and the increase in the overall allocation could lead to a surplus of Thrive funds, which is not addressed in the funding proposal which passed. The commission might need to amend the legislation to account for this potential for a surplus, or to rescind the past proposal and consider another proposal that uses a scaled model or a percentage and rank order model. 2) There are errors in the documents submitted by Metro Arts leadership for the January 6 deadline which will need correction.

Revised Timeline for FY25 Grant Cycle

Date	Benchmark/event	Description/notes
January 15	Executive Committee meeting	Address FY25 grants and funding processes to date.
January 16	Arts Commission meeting: Amending Legislation	The full commission will need to vote on any amendments to the legislation (see above).
January 17	Refiling legislation	Amended legislation to be refiled. The Commission will need to work with the council/sponsor to ensure support for the substitute amendment.
January 21	Metro Council meeting	Amended legislation approved by resolution.
January 22-February 18	Submittable reopens	Submittable reopens for applicants to amend or withdraw applications based on new guidelines. This open period will coincide with the staff outreach activities detailed here .
February 3-7	Scoring panel training	Training opportunities for community members selected for grant review panels.
February 10-11	Staff final technical review	Staff will conduct final technical review for applicants who have revised or modified applications.
February 24-25	Applicant Scoring	Applicant scoring panels take place.
February 26-27	Grants Committee meeting	To approve awards and allocations as determined by scoring panels.
February 26-27	Commission meeting	To approve awards and allocations recommended by the Grants Committee.
February 27	Award announcements	Award and fiscal agent announcements. The process of staff technical reviews should enable a quick “sorting” of those that score at the minimum required level for funding.